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Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Wednesday, 21 February 1990, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. GARBA (Nigeria)

- General debate [81 (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 8 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Ms. ODIE-ALI (Guyana): The seventeenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly, called to consider the question of international co-operation in the global campaign against narcotic drugs, is a decidedly solemn, if not sombre, occasion. That the Members of the Organization have seen fit to meet urgently in this session - and, I may say, to be represented at the highest levels that, at this time, our limited financial and human resources permit - is, I submit, ample testimony to our recognition of the gravity of the situation. That acknowledgement, however, must be but the point of departure for the work that we do during this session.

The issue of the illicit production, supply, demand, trafficking and distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances is by no means new; nor are the efforts to organize national, regional and global defence mechanisms recent. Since 1961, with the adoption of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, through to the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, we have renewed and redoubled our efforts within this Organization and its related agencies in our quest to contain and, ideally, to eliminate the scourge of the illicit trafficking in and use of narcotic drugs. That concerted effort is readily summarized and simplified; our alarm and increasing concern over the ineffectiveness of our endeavours are less so.

As countries and peoples, we are each affected in varying degree by the drug trade and the drug threat. Undeniably, we have seen this particular scourge gathering a momentum so great that it by far outpaces our attempts at containment. We must acknowledge that today numerous countries for which the drug problem, only a short time ago, was a largely academic concern have now joined the ranks of the

(Ms. Odie-Ali, Guyana)

infected. In addition, we must recognize that the complexity and transboundary nature of drug-related problems have grown beyond our anticipation. While the concern is common to developed and developing countries alike, there is no doubt that the burden of coping falls more heavily on those for whom the resources, both financial and human, are scarcer.

My country, I believe, falls into precisely the latter category. Although, for the purposes of classification, the illicit trafficking in and use of narcotic drugs is not a problem of epidemic proportions, it is none the less high on our list of national concerns. Within the restrictions imposed by our modest resources, we have therefore engaged in a conscious programme aimed at containing the problem as it is presented. There is now in place a national campaign to impose heavy penalties, under the law, for all drug-related offences. Accompanying this are nation-wide programmes of education and rehabilitation.

Bilaterally, Guyana has also engaged in agreements with its immediate neighbours - Venezuela, Brazil and Suriname - in an attempt to reinforce the common struggle against trafficking in narcotic drugs. We have also been co-operating fully with the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom and other countries further afield. Our commitment has been restated regionally and internationally in the support given to the many efforts at finding an early solution to the problem.

Despite our numerous collective endeavours, however, it is clear that programmes and mandates cannot be fulfilled without the requisite resources. As a small State, a developing country and, moreover, a nation for which the drug problem constitutes yet another threat to national security, it is our duty to add our voice to the voices that have already called here and elsewhere for the early, if not immediate, provision of the funds needed to implement existing programmes, nationally, regionally and globally.

(Ms. Odie-Ali, Guyana)

It is a recognized and accepted fact that the drug problem is a global problem and one that has to be addressed and solved collectively. Likewise, we need to acknowledge that our capacity to participate effectively in the common effort is and always will be limited by the extent of the resources at our individual disposal. In this regard, we call on developed countries to commit themselves more fully to the global campaign by way of the resources that they pledge to the multilateral effort.

As I said at the outset, an adequate framework for international co-operation has already been devised. Our urgent task now is to equip it to respond adequately to the needs of the international community and, more particularly, of small developing countries. There is, for example, compelling reason for strengthening the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control, which was established to finance drug control projects based on national and regional plans. The Fund has been of appreciable benefit to countries such as mine and is thus deserving of our full support and encouragement. It is equally important that we ensure, in the face of obviously limited resources, that all drug-related agencies within the United Nations system are so effectively directed as to guarantee the optimization of results.

In this context, my delegation hopes that continuing emphasis will be placed on public awareness campaigns designed to sensitize our peoples to the dangers of drug trafficking not only to their own welfare but to that of the State as a whole. Such programmes, if properly conceived and implemented, can do much to reduce the demand, thereby destroying the incentive to produce. In this exercise there must be widespread participation - of Governments, the private sector, and international agencies - to mobilize the forces of public opinion against narcotic contamination. Simultaneously, increased attention must be paid to the requirement for treatment and rehabilitation, which are vital to the preservation of a healthy

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(Ms. Odie-Ali, Guyana)

and productive society. These prophylactic measures are not without significant cost, but, bearing in mind the even greater economic and social costs that their absence entails, no effort should be spared to find the wherewithal for their administration.

(Ms. Odie-Ali, Guyana)

Needless to say, the attack on trafficking in all its manifestations must be sustained and targeted to curb the flow between the centres of production and those of consumption. The chain between the processing and transportation systems must be severed and the narco-traffickers made subject to the harshest penalties of the law. To this end, international co-operation must extend to the promotion of appropriate legislation to deter all those who seek to gain from the illicit trade. It goes without saying that such legislation must be bolstered by adequate enforcement to guarantee successful application. We must consequently envisage more extensive co-ordination of law enforcement co-operation and greater expansion of training programmes for law enforcement personnel in investigative matters and methods, interdiction and narcotics intelligence.

At a more fundamental level, we must be able to research and analyse the ever-changing patterns of drug use so that we can better plan to prevent their constant growth. This is clearly indicated by the International Narcotics Control Board, which has said:

> "Too little is known about the actual extent of drug abuse, patterns of abuse and shifts in such patterns. Periodic epidemiological surveys are essential to devising effective demand-reduction programmes targeted at high-risk populations."

We ourselves are especially concerned as a transit country with spiralling indigenous use of drugs. Clearly, the drug trade is highly metamorphic and must be closely and continuously watched for new forms of operation. This conference offers a timely opportunity to review the problem of drug trafficking and to enhance the scope and effectiveness of international co-operation in its solution.

At the conclusion of our deliberations during this session we hope to adopt a political declaration and a global programme of action. Our work would be less than complete, however, if we were not to take advantage of the opportunity offered

(Ms. Odie-Ali, Guyana)

by this special session to bring to fruition existing programmes and to fulfil existing mandates, which at present lie fallow for want of resources - financial, human, technological and intellectual. It is our hope that there will be renewed commitment to the drug abuse control agencies and systems within this Organization and that Member States will pledge, in the measure that is available to them, those resources which are crucial to the implementation of global programmes in the campaign against the illicit use of and trafficking in narcotic drugs. For those who wage battle armed only with courage and conviction, assistance cannot come too soon.

Mr. VOLLEBAEK (Norway): Drug abuse is on the increase world wide. The production of narcotic drugs is spreading. Illicit trafficking is increasingly well organized and difficult to combat. Consequently, the drug problem constitutes a threat not only to the health and welfare of individual human beings, but to the very foundations of society.

The narcotic drugs problem cannot be solved without effective international co-operation on the subregional, regional and global levels in addition to national measures, and this represents a tremendous challenge to the world society.

The Norwegian Government considers the convening of this special session very important and has repeatedly stressed its hope that the session will produce concrete results. We, the Member States of the United Nations, must demonstrate that the international community is ready to shoulder its responsibility in combating the international scourge of drugs. This, admittedly, is no easy task. However, we should not overlook the fact that over many years the United Nations has made important advances in the international campaign against drugs, and that the United Nations and its Member States already possess key tools and instruments well suited to this task.

(Mr. Vollebaek, Norway)

The highly successful International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking that took place in Vienna in 1987 identified all major targets in the areas concerned and adopted a broad strategy in its Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline, which still constitutes a valuable basis for consideration by Governments for the further development of national policies. Over the past decades a number of very important conventions have been adopted by Member States. The 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances is such an important instrument. Speedy ratification and implementation of that Convention would greatly enhance our capacity and possibility to make considerable progress in the international fight against drugs. Norway for its part intends to ratify that Convention during 1990.

We, the individual Member States, have the primary responsibility to undertake the necessary action at the national level. Thus, we should all realize that the campaign against the illicit supply of narcotic drugs can produce lasting and sustainable results only if member Governments undertake determined and comprehensive efforts. This entails reducing demand and establishing sound national structures and programmes in the prevention, rehabilitation and treatment areas, as well as suppressing illicit trafficking. Intensified emphasis must be placed on measures to reduce the demand for drugs. This is vital if we are to succeed in eliminating illicit production and trafficking.

Many of our nations, including Norway, are putting increasing effort and resources into reducing the local demand for drugs. As we grow more acutely aware of the interplay of demand and supply, we recognize that a multisectoral approach towards these problems is necessary. The United Nations should, therefore, also have a role in assisting Member States, upon their request, in drawing up national and regional strategies.

(Mr. Vollebaek, Norway)

As an example of the regional approach, I should like to point to the existing co-operation of the Nordic countries in these areas. The Nordic Co-ordinating Committee on Drug Abuse has been operating since 1971. The activities of the Committee cover the health and social welfare sectors, the judicial system and the law enforcement agencies. Since 1984 co-operation on drugs between the central enforcement authorities in the Nordic countries has been organized by the Nordic Police and Customs Drug Law Enforcement Co-operation Group. In 1985 a Nordic plan of action against drugs was adopted by the Nordic Council of Ministers. The plan has resulted in intensified co-operation in a number of areas.

(Mr. Vollebaek, Norway)

Within the framework of co-operation between the police and customs authorities, Nordic drug liaison officers have been stationed in several drug-producing and transit countries. Drugs seized in the Nordic countries have been analysed for the purpose of establishing their origin and distribution routes. Co-ordination has also taken place in the development of technical equipment, in training activities and in elaborating guidelines for joint operations.

At a conference in January of this year the Nordic Ministers of Health and Social Affairs, Justice, Public Administration and Home Affairs discussed future work and co-operation with regard to the drug situation in the Nordic countries and adopted an eight-point Nordic programme against drugs. That programme has been made available to the special session in conference document A/S-17/6.

In the context of regional co-operation I would also refer to the recent meeting at Cartagena between Colombia, Bolivia, Peru and the United States of America. I would like to join others in commending the constructive results of that meeting as reflected in the Cartagena declaration, which obviously have a direct bearing on our work as well.

The role of the United Nations in international action was clearly established in resolution 44/141, in which the General Assembly resolved that action against drug abuse and illicit production of and trafficking in narcotics should, as a collective responsibility, be accorded the highest possible priority. It also stated that the United Nations should be the main focus for concerted action against illicit drugs.

The Norwegian Government would like the special session to set in motion the programmes and processes to make possible the attainment of those objectives. In particular, I wish to emphasize the following. So far as the role of the United Nations and the United Nations system is concerned, the special session should

(Mr. Vollebaek, Norway)

reaffirm the mandates that have already been given to the United Nations system. The session should also adopt measures to bridge the resource gap that at present prevents the relevant United Nations bodies and organs from fulfilling their mandates. The session should, furthermore, enhance and strengthen the United Nations role through additional mandates, with corresponding adequate resources. It is the hope of the Norwegian Government that the ongoing work in the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination as regards the system-wide plan can be completed before 31 March this year. The preliminary progress report, which has been submitted to the special session, is a key document. It highlights, in particular, the need for adequate resources to carry out the existing mandates.

The international campaign against drugs cannot be won unless we are prepared to mobilize in it to the fullest extent possible all available resources. This is not the case today. Only 0.4 per cent of the United Nations regular budget is allocated to the fight against drugs. Thus, it goes without saying that the gap between the resources available and the task before us is dramatic. In order to make sure that the global programme of action to be adopted at the special session will be implemented and have an effective impact, we must see to it that the United Nations is provided with the necessary resources to do the job envisaged for it. We are all aware of the vast array of resources available to the drug traffickers, with their huge networks of financial systems, international organized crime and transport and with an estimated $500 billion involved annually in illicit drug trafficking. Consequently, adequate regular budget allocations must be made available to enable the United Nations to discharge its mandates and fulfil its tasks.

On the other hand, economic realities should also be taken into consideration when drawing up the global action programme so as to ensure that the outcome will be a realistic and balanced agenda of priorities. In this context I should like to

(Mr. Vollebaek, Norway)

state that my Government sees the importance of taking due account of the economic factors and needs of producer countries in the struggle against illicit production and trafficking of drugs. A concrete and action-oriented global programme will, in our view, increase the likelihood of additional funds.

We must also ensure that resources are used in the most efficient way. There is a need to reform the structure of the United Nations drugs bodies. There are currently three separate United Nations bodies devoted entirely to the fight against drugs. One is the Division of Narcotic Drugs, another is the International Narcotics Control Board, with its secretariat, and the third is the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC). It is the view of my Government that the present arrangement no longer adequately meets the need for a more co-ordinated and coherent United Nations response. We realize, of course, that restructuring is no substitute for effective international measures in this area. It is our hope that the expert group mandated by the General Assembly to look into the question of structures will also explore the possibility of creating one single unified United Nations drugs body.

Before concluding, permit me to say a few words about the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control. Norway has consistently supported UNFDAC from the start and is proud to be included among the major donors. We intend to maintain this position in the years to come. The Fund plays a leading role in developing major programmes of assistance in the drugs field, particularly through rural development programmes. We realize, however, that it is often difficult to provide economically viable alternative crops. Nevertheless, the best way to reduce supply at the source is by providing alternative income for the peasants, combined with appropriate social infrastructure and improvement of the criminal justice system. We are convinced that this work is best carried out by the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control.

(Mr. Vollebaek, Norway)

I would also like to commend UNFDAC for its very valuable input to the elaboration of the global programme of action. I hope that the special session will consider attentively the subregional approach put forward by UNFDAC to address the overall drug phenomenon in areas with highest production. In my view, such an approach will help to eliminate a situation in which illicit cultivation is simply pushed from one country to another.

Drug abuse today is no longer only a health and social problem; it is a threat to the basic values of society, to public and economic order and to democratic political systems. Neither the United Nations nor its Member States can afford to lose the battle we are now waging. When faced with this complex array of issues, we should not forget that progress is being achieved, not least within the United Nations.

We should all realize that unless we make considerable progress in our joint and individual efforts in combating drugs we shall be haunted by the spectre of the legalization of drugs. I have no doubt that such a course will have extremely negative consequences for Member States and their populations and will entail enormous losses and sacrifices.

In concluding, I reiterate our hope that the special session will give a new impetus to the fight against the narcotic drug menace, that it will result in a concrete, action-oriented global plan and that that plan will attract the necessary additional resources.

ADDRESS BY THE HONOURABLE ARTHUR N. R. ROBINSON, PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr. Arthur N. R. Robinson, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, was escorted to the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT: I have great pleasure in welcoming the Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, His Excellency the Honourable Arthur N. R. Robinson, and I invite him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. ROBINSON (Trinidad and Tobago): I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to address the seventeenth special session of the United Nations General Assembly. There is no more urgent need today than that with which this special session is concerned: to expand the scope and increase the effectiveness of international co-operation in the fight against all aspects of the drug menace.

I extend my warmest congratulations to you, Sir, on your election as President of the special session. I am confident that your diplomatic experience and your profound understanding of the issues will be of considerable assistance to us in our search for consensus on a global programme of action against the production and abuse of, and trafficking in, narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

Permit me also to express my sincere appreciation to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, His Excellency Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for the leadership role which he has exercised on important international issues and which he will once more be called upon to undertake in the development of a United Nations system-wide action plan on drug abuse control.

There is a compelling need for communities the world over to be fully awakened to the dangers of illicit drugs. It is essential that they be made to recognize the serious threat not only to individuals and families but to national institutions, and indeed to the very sovereignty, territorial integrity and

(Mr. Robinson, Trinidad and Tobago)

independence of States, emanating from the powerful international drug cartels. The danger is particularly real for small States. Illegal arms transfers, increased domestic consumption of hard drugs, and increased levels of criminality present new and frightening hazards for our internal security.

Indeed, countries which were previously only producer areas have now developed massive consumption patterns, and significant drug consumer States have become drug producers.

The problem continues to escalate, and drug addicts, as we have heard, now number millions throughout the globe in every national, ethnic, social, economic and age category. In addition, new varieties of addictive substances continue to be introduced to the market year after year, frequently in forms and ways of application more potent and dangerous than ever before.

Countries have almost overnight found themselves burdened with individuals who have been transformed into the likeness of lurking predatory animals, who satisfy either their material greed or their uncontrollable drug habit by relentless assaults on the population. In the process, the very fabric of the family and society is being destroyed, and tremendous moral, social and economic burdens are being imposed on the Governments of the day.

These afflictions have assumed dimensions that demand more determined and effective approaches. No longer can we afford to limit ourselves to traditional methods. We now have the urgent responsibility to find and introduce bold, carefully analysed strategies. The search for these strategies will demand that we reassess our previously held perceptions and attitudes and produce early and positive results.

Over the past year we have shared the trauma and distress of our brothers in Colombia, where the power and ferocity of the drug cartels have challenged the very

(Mr. Robinson, Trinidad and Tobago)

authority of the established Government. This display of savagery on their part clearly demonstrates the extent to which the drug hierarchy is prepared to go in pursuit of its aims.

In contrast, the admirable show of courage and strength by the people of Colombia and the resolve of the Colombian Government to do battle with the cartels are graphic illustrations of the efforts and the sacrifices we must be prepared to make to curb and ultimately eliminate this scourge of mankind.

Many of our countries have felt the full impact of the horror of the cocaine pandemic. Those States that have been relatively unscathed so far cannot afford to be complacent or, through narrow self-interest, seek to adopt an isolationist approach in the vain hope that the drug menace will pass them by. The nature of this most recent drug epidemic has been such that no country could possibly feel secure and invulnerable.

The international community has been able to achieve concerted action on this issue before. No less than 12 multilateral drug control treaties have been concluded under the auspices of the League of Nations and the United Nations. Trinidad and Tobago is a party to several of these treaties, and in particular to the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and the 1972 Protocol amending that Convention. More recently, Trinidad and Tobago signed the 1988 International Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which is the product of the highest level of international co-operation on drug matters to date. Permit me to make the strongest appeal to Member States to take all necessary legislative and other measures to facilitate the early entry into force of this Convention Pending its entry into force, I also urge Member States to take provisional measures, in keeping with the Convention, to criminalize narcotic money laundering; to facilitate the exchange of evidence of drug crimes;

(Mr. Robinson, Trinidad and Tobago)

to trace, freeze and confiscate the proceeds of illicit trafficking; and to utilize the technique of controlled delivery.

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago is currently preparing legislation consolidating earlier statutes dealing with the suppression and control of the production of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. That legislation will also take into account the 1988 Convention so that the drug law enforcement agencies in Trinidad and Tobago will have an additional legal instrument to penetrate bank secrecy in drug-related investigations; to identify, trace and freeze or seize the proceeds of drug traffickers; to extradite alleged offenders; and to render mutual judicial and legal assistance to other States parties to that Convention.

(Mr. Robinson, Trinidad and Tobago)

In my country we have over the last decade experienced a tremendous increase in drug availability and consumption. This phenomenon none among us seems to have been able to predict. We have since, however, acquired a better understanding of the underlying factors that influence the flow of trade in illicit drugs. We have realized that, as the interdiction strategies in the northern Caribbean became more effective, a new trade route developed in the southern Caribbean, directing increased quantities of cocaine through Trinidad and Tobago. We soon realized that we had in fact become a major drug transit point.

As our status as a transit point grew we also developed a major consumption problem, one which has until now remained entrenched within our population even though there have been vigorous offensives with large seizures of cocaine by our law enforcement authorities. We have gone from a situation in which in 1970 we had no admissions to our hospitals for cocaine addiction to one in which for the last two years we have had over 1,000 admissions annually. In a country with a population ov just over 1 million people this is a truly dramatic and disturbing occurrence and has, as members can well imagine, created a crushing burden on our limited human and capital resources.

But Trinidad and Tobago is determined to take all possible measures within our limited resources to deal with the major international evil of drug trafficking and drug abuse. Our emphasis to date has been on treatment, with a well-established treatment and rehabilitation system in operation, on law enforcement legislation and on international co-operation, all of which we shall continue to strengthen.

In addition to adapting our legislation to support the international Convention on narcotics and psychotropic substances and expanding our treatment and rehabilitation resources, we have prepared a master plan setting out the overall programme initiatives and strategies to be employed in its implementation. The plan includes: training for the police, army, coast guard and customs in

(Mr. Robinson, Trinidad and Tobago)

supply-control methods; more adequate equipment to meet the escalating demands of the trade in narcotics; increased surveillance of our coastline; the interdiction of drugs at our ports of entry; and the eradication of marijuana plantations.

We have integrated drug education into the school syllabus and intensified the training of school teachers in the subject of drug abuse. We have introduced a major demand-reduction project which will focus on the development of a public information centre, a public education campaign and community health promotion activities. We have concluded a bilateral agreement with Venezuela and we are at varying stages of collaborative arrangements with the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Canada, France and our fellow Caribbean Community (CARICOM) countries. Here I must express our deep appreciation of the financial support afforded us by the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control, whose grant has assisted considerably in our national effort.

I am convinced that our own lessons on the unpredictability and uncontrollable causal characteristics of the phenomenon should be major considerations in the Assembly's deliberations at this session.

First, it is very difficult to predict the nature of the drug problem we may face in the future. Over past decades there have been major shifts in the drug problem in relation to the pharmacology, mode of use and production, and distribution patterns. Perhaps the most significant contribution to the destructive nature of the current epidemic has been the new form in which cocaine is packaged and used by the addicted population. An example of this is what is commonly referred to as crack. What will happen in the next decade is not known. However, what we do know is that the problem of addiction will not go away rapidly and that new variations of the problem will occur. Already we have seen the tendency to use cocaine products in combination with other narcotic substances,

(Mr. Robinson, Trinidad and Tobago)

such as heroin, and we have also seen the appearance of so-called designer drugs produced in the laboratories of conscienceless scientists.

Secondly, it is a fact that no single nation can hope to fight this problem without the co-operation of the international community. Unfortunately, the illicit drug trade is one of the most lucrative international commercial activities. According to the United Nations Division of Narcotic Drugs, the value of trade in illicit drugs ranges between $250 billion and $300 billion per year. Its success has been largely determined by the fact that the perpetrators of this crime have absolutely no restriction in what they perceive to be their operational field. The world is their market, its innocents their prime target. If our control and prevention strategies are particularly effective in one country or region, they simply shift to another country or region.

No population is immune from their sordid criminal activities. Their operational mechanisms form linkages that have scant regard for national boundaries and the international procedures that bind us. The obstacles that lie in the path of bringing these merciless offenders to justice are formidable. There is an ever growing and indisputable need for mechanisms to ensure that powerful individuals who are accused of offences be brought to trial and either exonerated or visited with the full rigour of the law.

May I emphasize, as I have done previously, that new levels of regional and international co-operation to overcome the problems posed in the prosecution of such criminal offences as illicit drug trafficking across national frontiers are now a matter of grave and urgent necessity. The trial of transnational offenders through acceptable investigative and judicial procedures should now be placed not only on domestic agendas but on regional and international ones as well. The proposal for an international criminal court with jurisdiction over certain

(Mr. Robinson, Trinidad and Tobago)

categories of offences is now a matter for urgent consideration by the international community.

While the international situation in the past might not have been favourable for such an innovative measures, I must ask again whether we can ignore or make weak and inadequate responses to the escalating dehumanization of our peoples by traffickers who, like maggots, fatten themselves on decay and death.

I would ask whether the international community can continue to permit these plunderers of mind and body to move in our midst with impunity and contempt. The answer must certainly be no. The answer must be the establishment of an international tribunal based on consensual arrangements and paying due regard to the sovereignty and dignity of States; a tribunal of eminent international jurists, freely chosen, who institutionalize and give flesh to the norms of international law and reflect the inescapable imperative of global arrangements for global crises.

(Mr. Robinson, Trinidad and Tobago)

The gravity of the situation demands no less a response from the international community. It is gratifying to see that there has been considerable abatement in the controversy as to whether the drug-abuse dilemma has emanated from or is primarily the fault of the producer or the consumer country. With the distinction between supplier and consumer country rapidly disappearing, the solution to the problem lies with simultaneous and comprehenseive offensives on all fronts. This realization has resulted in affected States engaging in intensified dialogue and activities in an attempt to develop the necessary arsenal to combat and destroy the drug trade. Unified efforts amongst States will surely spell problems for the drugs lords, as it will leave them few avenues of refuge and little opportunity to further entrench their global networks.

It is manifestly time for us to articulate the real problems and to spare no effort in developing practical strategies that can be quickly and effectively implemented. The International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking held in June 1987 marked the emergence of the necessary international will to address the problem. Now it is our solemn responsibility to advance the fight in all areas.

The existing United Nations agencies must be given the necessary support to promote and aid the implementation of the international drug conventions, especially the new convention, which more precisely addresses the current problems we face. Member States must be afforded the necessary assistance to implement the proposals contained in the excellent document emanating from the 1987 Conference, entitled "Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control".

This document, in addressing all aspects of the problem, brings together all the elements necessary for a national, regional and global prevention approach. We

(Mr. Robinson, Trinidad and Tobago)

need to focus our energies on implementing those measures on which we have agreed while at the same time being receptive to proposals that complement and enhance our search for effective solutions.

Governments must demonstrate the necessary political will to deal effectively with all aspects of the international drug trade and bring about its early eradication by all legitimate means.

Let us boldly proclaim as our goal a drug-free twenty-first century. Let us purge from our communities those who traffic in drugs, who deal in the death and destruction of our young people and who promote their interests by laundering their enormous financial profits generated from the suffering of helpless millions throughout the world.

Let us make the 1990s - the last decade of the twentieth century - a decade dedicated to combating drug dependency and to eradicating this scourge of mankind.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank very warmly the Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago for the important statement he has just made.

Mr. Arthur N. R. Robinson, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, was escorted from the rostrum.

ADDRESS BY SENATOR GUILLERMO LARCO COX, CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AND MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF PERU

The PRESIDENT: The Assembly will now hear a statement by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Peru.

Mr. Guillermo Larco Cox, Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Peru, was escorted to the rostrum.

The PRESIDENT: I have great pleasure in welcoming the Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Peru,

(The President)

His Excellency Senator Guillermo Larco Cox, and inviting him to address the General Assembly.

Mr. LARCO COX (Peru) (interpretation from Spanish): Because of its nature and magnitude, drug trafficking affects all mankind and threatens its health and security. As early as the first session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, Peru stated the need for the concerted action of the international community to fight to eliminate that scourge. But as with other approaches that are ahead of their time, ours was considered alarmist, neither a priority nor requiring immediate, strong and effective measures.

Thirty-five years later, the United Nations is meeting in this special session, hard-pressed by the magnitude that this scourge of modern society has achieved. We are moved by the sole purpose of attaining a common position and of pooling our efforts to enable international co-operation to meet the new dimensions of the problem. The Government of Peru commends that effort since, without a global programme of action based upon a comprehensive understanding of the problem to be realized in rational measures of co-operation, the results will remain limited and unproductive. There is much at stake, because the drug-trafficking phenomenon involves economic, social, ecological, juridical and political aspects. A simplistic approach to the solution of the problem has not prevented its sudden increase. According to statistics, now more than ever there is a higher production of, traffic in, commercialization and abuse of cocaine, leaving us with the unpleasant sense of being the leaders in a fight in which the sacrifice of many lives and the allocation of resources appear to have been in vain.

But in expressing our frustration we simultaneously reaffirm our determination to fight against drug trafficking to its total eradication. We know that we will fight within the context of a long, complex and costly process, and that Peru is one of the three front-line States in the battle against cocaine to which we are

(Mr. Larco Cox, Peru)

committed. We Peruvians are incurring a sacrifice disproportionate with our capabilities, but at the same time we know that we are propelled by an ethical imperative that makes us optimistic in the knowledge that we can count on the effective support and co-operation of the United Nations and all its Member States.

In this world gathering, there arises a historic responsibility. We must send a clear message to drug traffickers that we will fight united to put an end to the various stages of the drug-trafficking process, that we will eliminate demand and institute crop-substitution, and that we will bequeath to our youth a more just world, a world with values based on human potential and with a clear perception of fundamental freedoms and thus opposed to archetypes that often require from the individual distorted patterns of behaviour beyond the individual's reach.

In order to understand the problem, we should begin free of prejudice and approach it with the objectivity that its complexity demands. In that sense, we recognize that the problem of drugs and their illicit trafficking is linked to the ways people interrelate, and its roots nurtured by the poverty that characterizes most of our societies.

(Mr. Larco Cox, Peru)

An international order with unjust terms of trade that are increasingly unfavourable to the production of our raw materials and the adjustment policies linked to the managing of our immense foreign debt, which have an impact on our underdevelopment, compel our peasants, weighed down by poverty and marginalization, to provide indirectly the stimuli demanded by individuals and societies with false values that lead to distortions in social behaviour patterns. We must therefore address the problem at its roots, counteracting its aetiological factors, be they economic, social or cultural.

Given this reality, the approach taken so far has been based on a simplistic diagnosis, which has resulted in a basically repressive response that disregards the social and economic conditions that explain the production, sale and consumption of drugs. The measures adopted have been essentially punitive, geared towards suppressing increasing criminality. After years of imposing ever harsher penalties and of intensive police procedures, it would seem that we have come full circle.

However, a change has now taken place. Today the axiomatic principle of shared responsibility is recognized. While not shirking our share of responsibility as producers, it is a known principle that a product is produced to meet a demand. Similarly, in illicit drug trafficking other factors are involved: on the one hand precursor chemicals and on the other hand the requirement for a financial system that allows the laundering of illicit profits in the countries affected by drug abuse. All this widens the framework of responsibility.

Drug trafficking, always encouraged by a demand that establishes imbalances, makes it impossible for those of us trapped in underdevelopment, to whom a very small amount of the profits generated by drug trafficking reverts, to compare ourselves with those who create and sustain that demand and make it a major

(Mr. Larco Cox, Peru)

mechanism for the accumulation of wealth. We can only ask, therefore, for significant support commensurate with the magnitude of our underdevelopment.

While pointing out these basic facts, we also reaffirm our conviction that a global war against drug trafficking must be in the framework of the principles of international law, in particular respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and non-interference in their internal affairs. If no agreement is reached on these terms, the war against drug trafficking will be distorted, its ethical principles debased, and its goals undermined, and it will eventually be turned into an instrument of power and interventionism, which is unacceptable in a world working towards better understanding and co-operation.

The global war against drugs, as defined in resolution 44/142, is based upon the principle of the shared responsibility of the international community. It is therefore high time to consider the problem of drug trafficking in its essence as a huge monopolistic phenomenon of the market place, the monetary value of which, according to the annual report of the Secretary-General, exceeds that of the international trade in oil and is second only to revenues obtained through the illicit arms traffic. We must therefore consider realistically and in a way compatible with our objective every option or combination of options that could ensure victory over drug trafficking, tackling its essential character and not just its secondary aspects.

Since the benefits and margins of profit for drug traffickers are immense, the theoretical interdiction of the drug lords, the hypothetical eradiction of cultivation or the widespread militarization of the problem would only lead to rapid replacements in cartel management, the transfer and expansion of current illicit zones of cultivation and a re-evaluation of the economic factors inherent in solving the problem.

(Mr. Larco Cox, Peru)

We are confident that the international community understands that the key to the problem is not to be found in the elimination of cultivation, just as it has accepted the fact that an increase in demand would worsen the problem. A solution to the problem of coca production can be found only after alternative economic development geared to crop substitution has been brought about. For this purpose multilateral proposals, as defined by the Andean countries, to secure the co-operation necessary for the solution of their grave economic and social problems, must be further developed.

International co-ordination and co-operation must be the basis of national, regional and international policies aimed at the eradication of poverty through development. This necessitates, within the international economic order, revision of the terms of trade and of the external debt, because if the problems of development are not resolved it will be impossible to achieve the desired objectives. We must achieve access to the markets of developed countries and appropriate prices for the traditional and substitute products by means of a system similar to that in other regions.

The current situation in Peru has meant that food crops have been replaced by coca cultivation and this has further distorted the internal economic process. There has also been a process of inverse crop substitution: 680 hectares of coca were eradicated in 1988, while in that same year the illicit production of coca leaves increased by more than 5,000 hectares.

We therefore emphasize that the political will to combat drug trafficking must be reflected in the adoption of international agreements that eliminate trade restrictions and ensure preferential treatment as the only way to make alternative development programmes viable. We would interpret refusal or failure to reach such agreements as a lack of true political will to carry out concerted action.

(Mr. Larco Cox, Peru)

Sixty-five per cent of the production of coca leaves used world wide for the illicit production of cocaine has been attributed to Peru. It is therefore demanded that Peru adopt a large number of measures to criminalize and penalize illicit cultivation, isolating it from the economic and social conditions from which it springs and ignoring the political and social consequences of exclusively repressive treatment of the producers. This must be seen in the context of the all-out terrorism that will erupt if such measures are implemented, because it is clear that they would result in a strengthening of the criminal collusion between drug trafficking and terrorism.

Peru, however, in the interest of the international community and because of the ethical principles that inspire it, has been waging almost single-handed an unequal battle against drug trafficking. But we can no longer believe that, miraculously, countries affected by illicit production will be able to win individually a fight that is the responsibility of all of us.

On the other hand, there has been an attempt to affirm that the production of coca leaves enriches the peasants and reactivates the Peruvian economy because it is allegedly an important source of foreign exchange. I must stress that the greatest value that accrues from cocaine trafficking lies in processing and marketing - stages that do not take place in Peru. In my country coca leaves are grown, but cocaine is not produced. Coca leaves have been cultivated since time immemorial for uses other than the production of cocaine, uses that cannot be associated with the illicit product that now threatens our youth. The amount of illicit revenue now incorporated in our economy is insignificant, and in any case absolutely minimal compared with the resources that Peru devotes to the fight against this scourge.

(Mr. Larco Cox, Peru)

I have just participated in the Cartagena summit, convened at the highest political level by the countries of the hemisphere most directly affected by this problem of our region. Thus, we have marked the beginning of a concerted international effort, largely based on ethics and with very clear objectives in the context of a long, complex and costly process. I am optimistic that we shall achieve the participation and commitment of all the States in confronting this problem successfully.

The Cartagena summit constitutes a new form of understanding. It has meant for our countries setting aside the historical apprehensions that arose from a relationship too often dominated by the arrogant demands of the powerful. It has meant the replacement of partial agreements by a comprehensive multilateral approach which will serve as a framework for effective bilateral agreements. The purpose of this is to advance towards a new concept of global co-operation in the fight against drug trafficking.

In our opinion, the results of the Cartagena summit should serve to stimulate, in the context of the Organization, mechanisms through which the initiatives of all parties committed to this task may be channelled. For it is clear that, to the extent that our efforts are successful, drug traffickers will try to find alternatives in other markets that so far have been of lesser importance. I refer not simply to areas and countries in which in recent decades high levels of well-being and progress have been achieved, but also to countries in which, because of their own political dynamics, their peoples are now exposed to risks and values that are new to them.

The people and Government of Peru reiterate their unswerving commitment to the fight against the scourge of drugs. This fight cannot remain the exclusive burden of developing countries affected by illicit production. It demands the implementation of the set of measures to which I have referred and appropriate,

(Mr. Larco Cox, Peru)

unconditional international co-operation. The future of our societies is running an unnecessary risk, an immoral risk. All our Governments are ethically obliged to shoulder the responsibility of taking an active part in this war. We must forsake the pursuit of passive, simplistic, one-dimensional approaches.

We must set higher aims for our action, looking towards the long term, and not simply meeting the requirements and demands of internal public opinion. Let us recall this wise advice to statesmen: "Set your sights more on future generations than on the next elections." In this way we shall be able to confront the criminal phenomenon that today is subverting the very essence of international economic relations and frustrating the hope of moral renewal for future generations.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the General Assembly, I wish to thank the Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Peru for the important statement he has just made.

Mr. Guillermo Larco Cox, Chairman of the Council of Ministers and Minister for Foreign Affiars of the Republic of Peru, was escorted from the rostrum.

Mr. GU Yingqi (China) (interpretation from Chinese): First of all, Sir, please allow me to extend my warm congratulation to you on your election as President of the General Assembly at this special session and to wish the session success. This special session is highly important. Its convening gives full expression to the political will and the strong determination shared by the international community and the Governments of all countries to combat the abuse of, and illicit trafficking, in narcotic drugs. It is bound to play a positive role in the promotion of a global struggle against drugs and to have far-reaching impact.

Despite the countermeasures adopted by the international community in recent years, the situation concerning the abuse of and illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs world wide has continued to deteriorate. In quite a few countries, drug

(Mr. Gu Yinggi, China)

addiction is spreading rapidly. Drug-related deaths and unlawful acts have increased by a large margin. Some international drug gangs have continued their unbridled drug trafficking activities. In short, drugs have become a grave social problem in many countries, particularly some major Western countries. This has already aroused serious concern in the international community. All countries have now come to the understanding profoundly that international co-operation against drugs is highly necessary and pressingly imperative. Therefore it is both significant and timely that the General Assembly should at this special session issue a political declaration on this question and formulate a global programme of action against drugs.

The Chinese Government has followed closely the critical situation in regard to the international drug problem. It has actively advocated international co-operation in fighting drugs and made its own efforts to promote such co-operation. We are of the view that in developing this co-operation, it is essential that, in accordance with the purposes and principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter, the principles of respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and equality of States and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries be strictly observed. No country may exercise jurisdiction or administrative authority within the territory of another country; nor may it threaten other countries with force - even armed invasion - under the pretext that it is fighting drugs or engaging in international co-operation for the purpose of drug control. The implementation of bilateral or multilateral co-operative projects or of joint drug-control measures must be carried out without violating the constitution, laws or basic provisions of the domestic legislation systems of the country concerned.

(Mr. Gu Yinqqi, China)

Recently, however, as the international community has striven to strengthen international co-operation against drugs, some incidents that run counter to these principles have occurred in certain parts of the world. Naturally, such acts have met with widespread condemnation in the international community, and they cannot but do serious harm to the development of international co-operation against drugs.

(Mr. Gu Yingqi, China)

The Chinese delegation holds the view that to free the world of drugs the concerted efforts at the national, regional and international levels are required, with the national efforts as the basis. At that level, each country has its own successful experiences, which should be shared for each other's benefit. Anti-drug efforts at the national level should, in our view, follow a comprehensive approach: that is, public security organs, customs offices and health departments, as well as academic and research institutions, should co-operate closely, complement each other and co-ordinate their efforts. We have already achieved some satisfactory results in this respect.

We also believe that fighting drugs is the common responsibility of consuming, producing and transit countries. They should all work energetically to adopt counter-measures in the light of their respective conditions. The consuming countries bear the primary responsibility for reducing the demand for drugs. They should not only take effective measures to reduce demand and carry out in earnest treatment and rehabilitation programmes for drug addicts but also help the developing countries in such areas as funds and technologies with the difficulties caused by the drug problem. The producing countries should actively implement the grain crop substitution policy and persist in programmes aimed at the gradual reduction and eventual elimination of illicit planting. Transit countries should step up anti-drug efforts along their borders and, in close co-operation with the countries concerned, crack down on illicit trafficking, while taking effective steps to eliminate addiction in the border areas to prevent further spreading. On this basis, all countries should be encouraged to develop bilateral and multilateral co-operation against drugs. The role of the United Nations drug-control agencies and other relevant international organizations in this field should also be strengthened.

(Mr. Gu Yingqi, China)

Historically, narcotic drugs have brought endless disasters to the Chinese people. The Imperialists, when invading China, made the country a dumping field for their opium. The war fought over the opium trade ended with China ceding territories and paying war indemnities, thus opening the chapter in China's annals of subjection to great-Power aggression. Therefore, the Chinese people bitterly detest drugs. In view of the incalculable injury to the Chinese people caused by drugs, it was only natural that the 1909 International Conference on the Prohibition of Drugs, the first of its kind, should have been held in Shanghai, China.

Immediately after the founding of New China the Chinese Government took stern measures to put an end to drugs. As early as 24 February 1950 the Central People's Government issued a general order to ban opium drugs, prohibiting the smoking, sale, growing and private stockpiling of opium, morphine, heroin and other drugs, with severe punishment for offenders. This Government policy has been consistent and unswerving. Thus, for more than 30 years after its founding, China was able to enjoy the reputation of being a drug-free country.

In recent years, however, instances of drug trafficking have occurred from time to time, in which international drug gangs, in collusion with unlawful elements in China, have used certain Chinese border provinces and cities as transit channels for the transport of drugs to other countries or regions.

The Chinese public security organs and customs offices have stepped up their anti-drug operations by adopting effective measures, and have scored notable results. In 1989 we uncovered 547 drug-related cases and seized 269 kilograms of opium and 488 kilograms of heroin. In response to the constant rise in the number of drug addicts in China's border areas and the tendency of drug use spreading to the interior, the Chinese health departments have taken a number of active measures with respect to treatment and prevention. Rehabilitation centres have been set up

(Mr. Gu Yinggi, China)

in Beijing and Yunnan, in order to lay a good foundation for strengthened drug treatment, prevention and research in the future. Nevertheless, we remain confronted with many difficulties and problems with regard to drug abuse control, treatment and prevention and scientific research. We are willing to strengthen our co-operation with other countries in these areas through exchanges of experience and learning from each other.

The banning of narcotics abuse and the fight against illicit drug trafficking are without doubt long-term and arduous tasks, which requires persistent efforts at the international, regional and national levels. Our delegation is of the view that the Declaration and Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline adopted by the 1987 International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, adopted by the 1988 Vienna Conference, have provided comprehensive and detailed recommendations and requirements for the international campaign against drugs. Positive contributions will be made to the international struggle against drugs should effect be given to these recommendations and requirements.

The Chinese Government sent delegations to both the aforementioned Conferences. China's delegations were actively involved in the formulation of the new Convention, and China was among its first signatories. At its ninth session, on 4 September 1989, the Standing Committee of China's Seventh National People's Congress ratified the Convention. It is our hope that the countries which have not yet signed or ratified the Convention will do so at the earliest possible date, so that it may soon come into effect.

In the international struggle against drugs China has not only worked in close co-operation with other countries concerned but also co-operated extensively with the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control, the International Narcotics Control

(Mr. Gu Yinqqi, China)

Board, the United Nations Division of Narcotic Drugs, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL/ICPO), the Customs Co-operation Council and the World Health Organization, and has achieved marked results.

(Mr. Gu Yingqi, China)

However, it is a sobering fact that, with the intensified infiltration of international drug gangs, illicit drug trafficking via Chinese territory is likely to increase. Our task of clearing up drugs and drug addiction will be a long and strenuous one. The Chinese Government will, as always, adhere to reform and opening to the outside world, persist in its clear-cut policy of the strict prohibition of drugs, continue to strengthen its domestic efforts against drugs and addiction and endeavour to promote co-operation with United Nations drug control agencies and other relevant international organizations and bilateral co-operation with other friendly countries, thus making unremitting efforts to rid the world of the scourge of drugs.

The internationalization of drug-related crimes and their growing threat to human society have brought all of us together. In spite of differences in social systems, all the countries gathered here have a common political will and a strong determination to fight the abuse of and illlicit trafficking in narcotic drugs. We are convinced that so long as the international community moves quickly and in unison to take more forceful, comprehensive and effective action, we will achieve final victory over the drug monster and make fresh contributions to human progress and civilization.

Mr. KOMPLEKTOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics)(interpretation from Russian): The Soviet Union welcomes and strongly supports the convening of the seventeenth special session of the General Assembly, which is aimed at raising the level of and further expanding international co-operation in combating illicit trafficking in narcotic drugs and drug abuse. The Soviet delegation is of the view that the high level and representative character of this forum reflects the profound concern that exists with regard to this truly global problem that today faces mankind.

(Mr. Komplektov, USSR)

Members of the international community are becoming increasingly aware of the urgent need to join forces in a consistent and relentless struggle against what is is at once an evil and a disease. We have come together impelled by a premonition of great danger and with great hope, and those feelings should unite us.

We cannot but be pleased by the fact that in the past few years the most active development in international co-operation has been with regard to combating drug abuse and that nearly every year has been a milestone. Suffice it to recall the 1987 Vienna Conference and the 1988 Conference, which adopted an extremely important new United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. We would recall the keen interest and serious approach demonstrated in the course of the debate on those issues at the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly, which took the decision to convene this special session. Obviously, we can hardly reproach ourselves with complacency.

However, if we ask ourselves whether any prospects of radical solutions to the problem have emerged, the answer is not very comforting. In a sense, the problem has become even more complex and acute and has taken on new, negative dimensions. Moreover, far from decreasing, drug abuse and illegal drug-related activities have become even more widespread.

Does this mean that our efforts so far have been in vain or that our whole policy has been wrong? There are certainly no grounds for saying that. Rather, the whole drug problem and our perception of it have proved more complicated than we had thought. It had been perceived as a widespread problem, of course, but not as a global phenomenon. In other words, the measures taken tended to be selective and defensive in character and emphasis was put on the symptoms rather than on the disease itself.

(Mr. Komplektov, USSR)

The time has come for a systematic, comprehensive approach, for simultaneous treatment of all the aspects of the problem - socio-economic, medical and biological, legal, scientific and technical - and of each element of the chain - illegal production, supply, demand, trafficking, distribution of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, treatment and social rehabilitation.

The time has come to pool the experience, knowledge and achievements accumulated at the national and international levels and the efforts of international governmental and non-governmental organizations and to formulate a general strategy and ensure its consistent and purposeful implementation.

It is evident that there is no simple miraculous solution, and that, whatever the solution, it cannot be achieved through the efforts of countries working separately. It is equally evident that by joining forces, by formulating our objective in all its multiple aspects, we can decisively increase both our ability to control the disease and our confidence that it can ultimately be cured.

The special session affords us such a chance and we must seize it, particularly now that the situation has become more favourable. As has already been noted at this session, the international climate is changing for the better. There is increased understanding of the need to abide by international law. In addressing global problems, confrontation is giving way to non-confrontational approaches, reflecting a central concern for universal human values.

All these factors are increasing our ability to find new solutions that can breathe new life into the measures already taken under the auspices of the United Nations and can lead to a radical change that will enable us to combat and overcome the ills engendered by the spread of illicit drugs throughout the world.

(Mr. Komplektov, USSR)

As we see it, the main objective of the special session is to provide a political impetus, based on our common will, that will focus United Nations efforts on the adoption and implementation of concrete measures, including programmes, in this area. Our goal is to carry out a comprehensive programme of action aimed at attacking the root causes of the problem at both the national and the international level. At a time when the drug problem is becoming increasingly acute throughout the world, the general task of this body should be to formulate broad policy and to set goals, as well as to take practical steps to strengthen the international drug control system. The problem should be approached from a new direction and our former approach adjusted accordingly.

It is especially important to combat illegal demand because it is that demand that generates the multi-million dollar - or even multi-billion dollar - drug business. The problem is becoming so serious that some countries have already officially proposed the drafting of a new convention on the subject.

The final documents of the special session should reflect a set of measures aimed at combating both the illegal supply of drugs and the illegal demand for them, which should be viewed as complementary elements in a twofold objective. As an example, we could cite such an apparently unlikely aspect as ecology. Environmental questions are very serious for all producer countries, as they are for those countries in which climatic conditions promote the natural growth of wild narcotic plants over large expanses of territory. In those cases we are faced with the serious problem of replacing narcotic plants with other, useful plants, principally food crops.

(Mr. Komplektov, USSR)

The most serious attention should be paid to social activities and measures designed to eliminate conditions conducive to drug abuse. One of the main tasks in regard to reducing the demand for drugs should be to make the identification of drug addicts more effective, as well as to provide them with appropriate treatment - most important, treatment leading to social rehabiliation and reintegration into society. One of the most important aspects - perhaps, in the final analysis, even the most important aspect - is bringing together the best scientific minds in various countries to engage in fundamental research aimed at identifying the originating social, psychological and other deeply rooted causes that induce a person to use drugs.

A systematic analysis of all international legal instruments and comprehensive measures within the framework of the United Nations would show that in their majority they are aimed at all forms of control over narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, at the elimination of illicit trafficking and at the identification and treatment of drug addicts. Of course, that is important. However, we believe that the time has come to give special consideration to problems related to measures ensuring the overall harmonious development of the human personality. Of particular significance in the upbringing of a person is the spirit of personal responsibility for human health as a valuable asset in society. The focus should be placed on the human being, his psychology and his behaviour.

Yesterday, in his brief welcoming remarks at a luncheon, the Secretary-General used these very appropriate words: "To the health of mankind". I think this could well be the motto of the special session.

(Mr. Komplektov, USSR)

The work on international instruments at different phases of international co-operation has so far been, in effect, focused on solving problems which have already become deeply rooted. The preparation of such instruments began after the international community discovered that a serious problem had arisen in regard to narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Today, however, it is time to move on to a new, higher level. It is essential not to follow events but to anticipate them, to prevent the emergence of undesirable and dangerous trends. This approach presupposes the preventive nature of activities within the framework of the United Nations. It gives rise to a new and very complicated task of scientific development in forecasting methods with regard to events and trends that determine the dynamics of the evolution of this comprehensive problem. This will undoubtedly require serious efforts and the utilization of all the international community's capabilities. To anticipate and prevent, we need dynamism and the correlation and combination of different kinds of international measures, as well as the timely implementation of them.

In the light of the necessity of basing ourselves on the dynamics of events, in order to anticipate their development, we believe that the time is right for setting a longer-term task of producing a comprehensive, consolidated agreement in this field. Such a consolidated agreement could raise to a new level international control of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. It would cover the provisions already existing in conventions in force, as well as new ones not yet included in them. It would cover all aspects of co-operation in combating drug abuse, reducing demand and eliminating illicit trafficking, and it would establish - this is of extreme practical importance - a unified régime and machinery for the international control of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and specific chemical substances used to produce drugs illicitly.

(Mr. Komplektov, USSR)

With regard to the task of anticipation or prevention, we wish to emphasize that we in no way regard that task as in opposition to the fullest possible implementation and utilization of the existing agreements and mechanisms. On the contrary, we regard this as an indivisible, interrelated process.

As many representatives have pointed out here, the adequacy of measures taken by States at the national level is of vital importance. Our own experience validates this feeling. According to available information, tens of thousands of persons are now abusing narcotic drugs in our country. That might not seem such a large figure, but we are particularly concerned about the significant increase in the rate of drug abuse in recent years.

We are taking measures to improve control. The number of State-owned plantations of narcotic plants has been reduced and concentrated. A decision has been taken to stop sowing oil poppy. As long ago as the 1970s we completely stopped the licit production of opium poppy. Comprehensive operations aimed at identifying and eliminating illicit plantations of poppy and cannabis as well as their wild growth are being carried out. These measures have, to some extent, improved the situation. Substantial difficulties have, however, arisen. The elimination of the wild growth of cannabis on vast territories leads to the erosion of soil structure and have other grave ecological consequences. Research is being carried out to find ecologically safe methods for the elimination of narcotic plants; but, obviously, if all this work is to move along quickly and successfully, scientific efforts in all the countries concerned must be co-ordinated and integrated.

Strict measures have been taken in our country against drug traffickers. Citizens are subject to severe criminal sanctions for the illicit sowing of opium poppy and some species of cannabis and for the illicit distribution of drugs. At

(Mr. Komplektov, USSR)

the same time, a differentiated approach is applied to deal with the responsibility of drug addicts. A decree of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR adopted in 1987 makes it possible to apply administrative measures on a broader scale and not to apply criminal sanctions against those who voluntarily submit themselves to law-enforcement agencies and turn narcotic drugs over to them.

Treatment of drug addicts and assistance to drug abusers are provided in the USSR by a special narcological service within the health-care system, which has several hundreds of specialized narcological prevention and rehabilitation centres and hospitals providing comprehensive health and social care. Unfortunately, so far we cannot be satisfied with the success rate of treatment measures. So far as we know, the same problem exists in other countries too. In this context, joint research efforts and sound international programmes seem indispensable.

The procedures to ratify the 1988 United Nations Convention have already been set in motion in the Soviet Union. Simultaneously, preparatory work is being carried out for the introduction of the necessary changes and adjustments into Soviet legislation and the creation of appropriate administrative structures to ensure its strict implementation. We are ready to implement, as fully as possible, the provisions of the Convention before its formal entry into force, and we have already embarked on concrete co-operation with a number of countries on the basis of the Convention.

We have met here to seek together the ways and means of improving the effectiveness of existing international structures and to give thought to possible forms and methods of mobilizing the international community's concerted efforts to combat the social evil of our age. We firmly believe that such co-operation and, furthermore, any steps that are taken must be based on the strict and meticulous

(Mr. Komplektov, USSR)

observance of the norms and principles of international law and should not cause friction between nations - not to mention any exacerbation of the military and political situation in various regions.

We support the proposals to strengthen and improve the effectiveness of the existing United Nations bodies and units of the Secretariat that deal with these problems, and to attach the highest priority to their programmes. We are in favour of the formulation of effective specific documents and are ready to examine new, original ideas. In particular, we are in favour of the proposal on a United Nations decade against drug abuse as an instrument for implementing the global programme of action.

(Mr. Komplektov, USSR)

We suggest the inclusion in the final document of the special session - that is, in the global plan of action - of the following specific short-term and medium-term goals: to devise a multilateral system for checking the illicit transboundary transportation of narcotic drugs and to establish, on the basis of parity for the parties concerned, customs inspection posts at key points of illicit international drug trafficking, with due regard for the interests of countries of origin, transit countries and consumer countries; to begin international programmes to develop effective techniques for detecting illicit drug plantations and eliminate them in an ecologically safe way; to set up international programmes for the treatment and social rehabilitation of drug addicts; to establish within the framework of the United Nations a consultative centre for compiling and disseminating experience gained in fighting illict drug trafficking and drug abuse, assessing and integrating national scientific programmes and research in this area, and co-ordinating the efforts of nations to set up such programmes; to establish an integrated United Nations information network and data-bank on problems related to illicit drug trafficking and drug abuse along the lines of the United Nations criminal law information network; and to publish periodically an up-to-date list of central national bodies dealing with various aspects of eliminating illicit drug trafficking, preventing drug abuse and treating drug addicts, indicating external lines of communication, functions, terms of reference and so forth.

The Soviet delegation will do its utmost to contribute to the success of this session. We are ready to co-operate with the delegations of other nations and to make joint efforts in the effective struggle against the global evil of drug abuse. Only if united by common concerns, a common sense of responsibility and common hope can we be sure of success.

Mr. GARCIA VARGAS (Spain) (interpretation from Spanish): I wish first to congratulate the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, on the tenacity

(Mr. Garcia Vargas, Spain)

and energy he has shown since the International Conference in Vienna in 1987, which broadened the United Nations approach to the drug problem and oriented it towards the future. It has again become clear that the United Nations serves not only to solve bilateral conflicts between countries but also to deal with major global problems.

This special session provides a unique opportunity to strengthen the common struggle against the degrading and destructive drug problem through co-ordinated action and to investigate in depth its causes and consequences.

The evolution of drug use has accelerated in recent decades. The situation has changed from traditional, magical and sometimes pseudo-therapeutic use in many countries to massive abuse by the latest generation of semi-synthetic products of previously unknown power and with great addictive capacity, using highly pathological forms of administration. Traditional use cannot be compared with that which is currently widespread in our society. Thus, we are facing a new problem throughout the world.

This special session is the highest expression of the principle that all Member States of the United Nations can and must participate in the search for solutions. This serious problem is not limited to a few countries that produce and process drugs or consume them. Today, all countries are in one way or another involved in this problem, which can be dealt with only on the basis of joint responsibility.

The comprehensive approach of joint responsibility has superseded the conventional analysis that prevailed until recently and led producer and consumer countries to blame each other. This special session will establish a new international doctrine that rejects the division of countries into victims and criminals and encourages greater co-operation in all fields. We must provide an effective alternative, rejecting the tensions and conflicts that have existed until

(Mr. Garcia Vargas, Spain)

now. As the great Spanish poet Antonio Machado said, "If you want to build a house, it is of no use to know how to throw bricks at each other's head."

Furthermore, strong precedents exist. The resolute stand taken by the President of Colombia, Mr. Virgilio Barco, and his Government has shown that Governments can stand up to the threats of drug traffickers and mobilize society as a whole in defence of a democratic system of values and coexistence which is in no way compatible with drug trafficking.

The necessary actions against drug trafficking require greater energy, but that should not lead us to employ any system of suppression or control that could harm the good relations between countries that are essential if this complex struggle is to be effective.

The 1988 Vienna Convention against Illicit Trafficking in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, which I had the honour of signing on behalf of the Council of Ministers of the European Community at United Nations Headquarters in June 1989, provides the most suitable framework for our action. In addition to creating a new international approach in this area, it has made it possible to include chemical substances necessary for manufacturing drugs in the system of international inspection. Also, the fight against money laundering has become a major objective.

The ratification and implementation of that Convention should be the international community's primary goal in the coming months. Articles such as those concerning to the confiscation of drug traffickers' goods and control of their funds will be a vital reference point by which to steer a co-ordinated policy of suppression in a new direction. We must make the international banking system aware that the lack of openness in their operations and the concealment of facts concerning funds of doubtful origin can undermine their prestige since it could be viewed as support for drug traffickers.

(Mr. Garcia Vargas, Spain)

The international agreements that are beginning to be reached permitting the lifting of banking secrecy in certain cases related to money from the drug trade open new prospects of international banking co-operation against the traffic in narcotic drugs. Furthermore, the standardization of criminal legislation in this field within the European Community could give a significant impetus to the adoption of a decision at the highest possible level. The need to observe the banking code of ethics recently adopted at Basel should be impressed upon all Members of the Organization.

However, such co-operation in the banking field will not be successful if it does not extend to the more permissive financial institutions in the tax and investment havens which today constitute the greatest obstacle in the fight against money laundering. With regard to tax havens, there should be greater control concerning the origin of funds and the identity of depositors.

In the framework of the United Nations, the adoption of a global programme of action on drugs will receive Spain's full support. That programme should include and give effect to all the contents of the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline adopted by the Vienna Conference in June 1987, and should also take into account the new elements introduced by the 1988 Convention. In the global programme of action North-South co-operation on the drug issue should be considered a further expression of the necessary solidarity among nations.

(Mr. Garcia Vargas, Spain)

Future generations would not understand and would find it unforgivable if, at a historic moment of world-wide détente and easing of international tensions, we failed to agree on a policy of aid and co-operation with drug-producing countries that would promote their social and economic development and enable them to abandon the cultivation of certain drugs. That co-operation would strengthen and encourage the democratic process and the defence of fundamental freedoms in those countries. That was established in very hopeful terms at the recent Cartagena summit.

The United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control is doing very positive work in support of the policy of crop substitution. But, together with those measures, we must consider the possibility of promoting the export of alternative products, encouraging flexible financing of the external debt and involving multilateral financial institutions, such as the World Bank, in the development of plans and programmes that foster the social and economic growth of countries engaged in the production and processing of narcotic drugs.

On the other hand, the countries afflicted by the serious problem of drug addiction must pursue a clear policy aimed at reducing drug demand, which is as important as reducing supply. Our developed, open Western societies, which are based on a high degree of individual freedom, are extremely vulnerable to the threat of drugs. However, we must reflect politically on the factors that encourage consumption, which are often difficult to tackle. We must review our system of values, which often glorifies individual success and acclaims economic power and achievement as the ultimate goal, encouraging competition rather than solidarity.

We can succeed in the fight against the trade in drugs derived from plants; but if we do not check the demand and deal with its causes, synthetic drugs, which do not derive from any plant, will become a threat of incalculable proportions in the next few years.

(Mr. Garcia Vargas, Spain)

Moreover, drugs are not merely a threat to the physical and psychological health of many human beings, but also a political risk. The emergence of AIDS and its ravages among intravenous drug addicts have highlighted the tragedy of that group and increased the risk of spreading HIV. The number of deaths associated with drug abuse has been greatly increased by death caused by AIDS, and the spread of that disease among the non-drug-dependent and heterosexual community forces us to take bold and realistic decisions.

The Spanish Government and the Spanish people are deeply worried by the incidence and effects of drug addiction in our country. The national consumption of heroin has been stabilized and we have managed to raise the number of drug addicts who attend care centres. There is an increasingly widespread conviction that drug dependence can be treated and that there are individual solutions to the problem, even though they may be difficult and costly. We have a drug treatment network, although it is still not enough, and the standards of the specialists providing treatment have substantially improved. All these factors are enabling a greater number of addicts to be treated through the care centres.

However, the extent of HIV infection among drug addicts is very high - 65 per cent of the total number of AIDS cases are intravenous drug addicts - and this has forced us to undertake programmes under which the heroin user has access to disposable syringes, as well as AZT and other substitute products provided free of charge through social security. All this is part of a policy of providing information on the ways in which the disease is transmitted by HIV, a policy aimed at that specific community.

Furthermore, although the consumption of heroin is being stabilized, the same cannot be said of cocaine, the use of which has expanded in recent years despite the considerable increase in police confiscations. The consequences of this phenomenon have not yet been evaluated by the health services.

(Mr. Garcia Vargas, Spain)

Consumption of the so-called designer drugs has also been increasing in Spain over the past few years, but not in a massive way, although the detected growth in certain regions gives rise to concern. However, it is encouraging to note that, according to recent surveys, an increasing majority of young Spaniards clearly reject drugs of any kind.

With regard to the control of the primary chemical products, the Spanish Parliament is about to ratify the 1988 Convention. We have provisionally adopted a control mechanism covering all such substances destined for export to certain producer countries.

In conclusion, I wish to make some proposals to the General Assembly.

First, the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs should be asked to study a more flexible classification system at the next regular session. Sometimes, several years may elapse between the time a new designer drug appears on the market and its inclusion on a compulsory control list, thus creating a very serious legal vacuum. Perhaps a system of control by pharmacological family should be developed to prevent the situation I have just described.

My second proposal is that international information be jointly compiled on the negative pathological effects of cocaine use and that this information be disseminated widely with a view to refuting the theories, sometimes spread by certain social groups, to the effect that its use is not harmful.

The third proposal is that the authorities responsible for the main financial institutions and bank administrations should be asked to act with greater speed and commitment in lifting bank secrecy and facilitating the investigation of bank accounts and funds that may be connected with laundering money obtained from trafficking. Special emphasis should be placed on off shore centres or financial havens, whether colonies or not, dependent on countries committed to the fight against trafficking.

(Mr. Garcia Vargas, Spain)

Finally, I should like to refer to the possible restructuring of the United Nations agencies dedicated to the drug problem, and in particular to the Division of Narcotic Drugs, the International Narcotics Control Board and the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control. I am not proposing to modify the present structure on the basis of possible overlapping of functions or problems of competence. The agencies that exist today are the instruments for achieving the objectives set out in the various conventions adopted. We should analyze whether these instruments are appropriate for the achievement of those objectives and not engage in an administrative debate that would undermine the efficiency of actions at present under way.

All the countries of the world have placed their hopes in this special session of the General Assembly, trusting that we will reach agreements and adopt a common policy against drugs. The convening of this session is in itself a success, because, as a great European writer has said:

"Everything brought to life by Man's effort, even if only for a day, is to be welcomed in a world so inclined to forget."

Here in New York we must make definite, realistic commitments. Time, especially if it passes without global decisions, is our worst enemy. A world free of drug abuse will be a world of more independent citizens, with greater control over their own destiny and with more freedom. That should be our goal.

Mr. K. D. KHAN (Pakistan): On behalf of the Government and people of Pakistan I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the important post of President of the General Assembly at this special session on narcotic drugs.

My delegation is confident and optimistic that this special session of the General Assembly, which has been convened at the dawn of a new decade, augurs well for humanity at large, and in particular for those organizations and institutions which are spearheading the global fight against narcotic drugs.

The decade of the 1980s was one of superabundance of drugs for the world at large and for our region, that is, South-East and Sout-West Asia, in particular. During that decade many countries increased their resources for combating drugs by means of enforcement. Yet reliable evidence and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL/ICPO) report of 1989 suggest that more drug contraband was produced, processed and sold than in previous years. Drug addiction is on the rise and so is drug-related crime on the street. Thus, the loss of human lives resulting from drug trafficking and abuse is also on the increase.

This shows that something has gone wrong somewhere in our global strategy. It may be that one of the factors was that less emphasis was placed on reducing demand. We believe that reduction of supply and reduction of demand are equally important for a successful strategy. They are two sides of a coin; if one side is smudged the coin will not be of any use to us.

The world drug scene showed a deterioration in 1989. However, in Pakistan, under the able leadership of our Prime Minister, the newly elected Government took stringent measures to curb the evil. Our fight on the drug front is showing success and a downward trend. This fact was recognized and appreciated even in the INTERPOL report, which says,

"In South-East Asia and South-West Asia Pakistan has taken decisive steps to hamper poppy cultivation."

(Mr. K.D. Khan, Pakistan)

We have not only brought down the net production of opium in the traditional inaccessible and difficult growing areas from 203 tonnes to 130 tons - a 36.5 per cent decrease. The Government of Pakistan has also reduced the area under cultivation from 11,590 hectares to 5,850 hectarees - a decrease of 49.5 per cent. The seizure of narcotic substances - heroin, opium, cannabis - has increased by 40 per cent, which speaks well for our country's enforcement activities.

The present Government's drug control strategy calls for an attack on all fronts - that is, against traffickers, producers and processors - and, of course, for attempts to reduce demand. Today, unfortunately, in Pakistan we have over 2 million drug addicts, of which 1 million are heroin addicts. In the year 1978 we did not have a single heroin addict, but by 1988 we had inherited over 1 million heroin addicts, thanks to 10 years of a dictatorial régime in our country that adopted a policy of apathy and neglect regarding drugs and drug traffickers. We are lumbered with this satanic gift and now this high demand poses a serious threat to our nation and to our enforcement activities.

Our latest survey in the country shows that the average heroin addict consumes 0.7 grammes of heroin, so that over 1 million addicts consume about 50 tonnes per annum in the domestic market. To obtain 50 tonnes of heroin one needs 500 tonnes of opium. Our production is 130 tonnes. The rest is a spillover from across the western borders and the movement of licit to illicit opium in the region, which needs strict monitoring. This high demand and the spillover make our task doubly difficult. I am afraid that Pakistan's resources alone may not be adequate to combat the situation effectively.

During recent years the question of drugs in one form or another has figured in almost every high-level conference and meeting. There is not an iota of doubt that the drug problem in one or many of its manifestations has transcended the

(Mr. K.D. Khan, Pakistan)

boundaries of all nations and is taking on dangerous dimensions, endangering the social and economic development and moral fibre of many countries.

The unanimous decision to hold a special session of the General Assembly to tackle the drug problem reflected the will of the comity of nations to address the problem and, as we deliberate upon the problem in its entirety, special responsibility rests on our shoulders to seize this momentous opportunity to thwart the ever spreading tentacles of the drug monster. New, bold and innovative initiatives are needed to supplement and strengthen what is already being done by the Organization. While we should look to the future, we should not lose sight of our past and should endeavour to use existing mechanisms as far as possible. The Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline for Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control (CMO), the Declaration of the 1987 International Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking and international instruments such as the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and the 1972 Protocol, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and the 1988 Convention are all as relevant today as when they were first adopted.

In my country the present Government has special faith in the 1988 Convention because we think that articles 5, 6 and 11 are the most potent weapons against traffickers. Therefore, on assuming power, the present Government declared that it would sign the document before the expiry of 1989. We fulfilled that obligation and, in the light of that, declared 1989 the year of combating the drug menace. We generously applied articles 6 and 11 even before signing the document and immediately moved a bill to amend the laws on asset seizure. We did so not because of international pressure but because we believe that extradition, control and asset seizure laws are the most effective weapons against traffickers.

The present Government of Pakistan believes that the fight against traffickers at the regional level also needs to be intensified. Therefore the Government of

(Mr. K.D. Khan, Pakistan)

Pakistan has undertaken to declare war on narcotics and is committed to taking effective measures to eradicate the drug menace both in the country and at the regional level. The Prime Minister, Mohtarama Benazir Bhutto, in her opening spech at the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation (SAARC) summit in Islamabad, proposed that 1989 be declared the year against narcotics in the region. This was reflected in the Islamabad declaration of the SAARC summit. As a result of that Declaration, a technical committee on the subject was established, which recognized the importance of elaborating a regional convention on drug control. A meeting took place recently at expert level for the elaboration of such a regional convention.

Apart from the regional initiative, the Government of Pakistan is co-operating fully with international agencies concerned with narcotics control and working actively on schemes for crop substitution in the traditional poppy-growing areas in the north. Liaison and working relationships have been established with foreign Government agencies, such as the United States Drug Enforcement Agency, the Federal Republic of Germany's BKA - Federal Office for criminal matters - the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the United Kingdom Customs and the Netherlands and Australian police forces. In December 1989 Pakistan concluded a new treaty with the Islamic Republic of Iran to combat drug trafficking in the region and along the border.

(Mr. K. D. Khan, Pakistan)

Moreover, to plug legal lacunas that provided the drug barons with an opportunity to use their money and influence to buy acquittal, a thorough scrutiny of existing laws against narcotic drugs is being undertaken to provide deterrent punishment for the violators. Two draft laws - providing for preventive detention and for seizure of assets acquired from drug income - have already been initiated by the Government of Pakistan, and with the active support of the United States of America, the Government has raised a financial task force, as envisaged in the 1988 Convention. This force is referred to as an anti-narcotic elite force. Its prime job is to investigate the assets and bank accounts of traffickers.

Fully conscious of the misery and plight of the people addicted to the poison of narcotic drugs, the Government of Pakistan has undertaken programmes for the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts. An awareness programme has been launched through the media to inform and alert the masses of the need for community awareness and action. Non-governmental organizations, private medical practitioners, social and religious workers, community elders and others are participating actively in the drug-abuse prevention measures through family-intervention and community-action programmes.

The Government of Pakistan appreciated greatly the invaluable assistance extended by the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control in the execution of our development projects in the poppy-producing areas in the North-Western Frontier Province adjoining Afghanistan. The aim of the projects is to replace poppy cultivation with the cultivation of cash crops, such as vegetables and fruit plants, and to build roads, schools, dispensaries and other vocational-education institutions. Through these programmes we have been able to eradicate poppy cultivation in a number of areas. Needless to say, we look forward to the best of co-operation with the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control, as has been the case in the past.

(Mr. K. D. Khan, Pakistan)

No country can fight the scourge of drug-abuse alone. We therefore expect the United Nations agencies to assist us in bringing about a positive change to solve this serious problem.

The special session on drugs gives us an opportunity to realize and reflect on the gravity of the situation and the urgency of the action that it merits. It also provides us with an opportunity to chart new paths, to devise new programmes, and to establish new guidelines - emanating from the realities as they exist - to save mankind from this pestilence and to secure the future of our children. My delegation extends its congratulations to the Preparatory Committee, particularly the Committee's officers, for the relentless effort that they put into production of the draft global plan of action and the draft political declaration. My delegation feels that some important and bold steps need to be taken in the unfathomed waters lest the tides consume us. The problem is not a North-South or an East-West one; it confronts the inhabitants of the earth, and we should behave and act accordingly. We are confident that the Ad Hoc Committee will produce documents worthy of the special session.

We look forward to a drug-free society in our own country and, indeed, in the world. We are determine to co-operate, and are dedicated to co-operation, with all individuals and nations to achieve this objective. The policy being pursued by the Government of Pakistan is based on the conviction that a global, concerted effort must be made, through unreserved and whole-hearted collaboration between all nations, to eradicate the scourge of drug abuse.

Mr. HURD (United Kingdom): It is a great pleasure and a privilege, Mr. President, to take part in this special session under your leadership and guidance. I am sure that we are right to be here, because the twin evils of drug trafficking and drug misuse put every nation in danger. No country is immune from

(Mr. Hurd, United Kingdom)

this plague - neither rich nor poor, capitalist nor socialist, neither nuclear super-Power nor tiny island State. This enemy makes allies of us all.

Drug addiction does not bring joy or peace of mind; it brings pain, misery and squalor. Nor is it just the addicts who are affected; the old lady robbed of her pension to pay for her attacker's addiction, the community distorted and debased by the drug trade - these too are the victims of drugs. Drug trafficking and drug misuse are the godparents of crime. Their craving for a fresh fix drives addicts to rob and to cheat. Narcotics may induce irrational, paranoid behaviour in the addict and lead him to kill or maim his neighbour. As we all know, the international trade in drugs offers huge profits for organized criminal gangs, who now resort not only to fraud and larceny, but to the terrorism of the bomb and the bullet in order to get their own way. In short, what we are discussing here is the slave trade writ large.

The statistics paint a gloomy picture. World opium production in 1989 was perhaps more than treble that in 1985. In Europe, heroin seizures are rising just as fast, and cocaine seizures have increased almost fourfold. It is inevitable, but too easy, in international gatherings of this kind to think simply in terms of statistics. Statistics never properly measure individual suffering. There are young children in many South American countries, abandoned and forced on to the streets, who become part of the cocaine-distribution system and addicts themselves and who, as a result, suffer brain haemorrhage and cardiac disorders. In my own country - Britain - customs seizures of illicit drugs leapt by more than 40 per cent in 1989. One seized consignment consisted of heroin contained in sweets - each sweet with enough heroin to kill a child. This is indeed a problem of nightmare proportions. But it is not just a nightmare; it is real.

(Mr. Hurd, United Kingdom)

We are gathered here because we know that the United Nations has to bestir itself to deal with this reality. The United Nations cannot afford, any more than national Governments can afford, a tepid or bureaucratic response. We must find the money and the people to do the necessary tasks. The draft global programme of action being prepared by the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole must address these questions.

Drugs are a problem for everyone. Producer and consumer countries must work together. Indeed, these labels are misleading. There is a distinction between reducing production and reducing demand, but ultimately both must be tackled together. The distinction between producer countries and consumer countries has become blurred. Many so-called producer countries have developed serious problems of drug abuse - as, indeed, we have heard this morning - while the illicit production of synthetic drugs, like amphetamines, is a curse within so-called consumer countries.

The Cartagena summit showed the resolve of both developed and developing nations. I warmly endorse the initiative that the Presidents of the United States, Peru, Colombia and Bolivia have set in hand. Let their resolve serve as an example to us all.

(Mr. Hurd, United Kingdom)

The existing three drugs bodies of the United Nations are already doing much useful work. The United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC), strikes us as an essential tool in the international effort. The United Kingdom contributes a regular annual sum to its work and has added almost £10 million in total to major projects in Pakistan, India, Bolivia and Ecuador. With more resources UNFDAC could do much more good work, especially in helping to enforce the law.

But the United Nations, in our judgement, is not as well equipped as it should be for the tasks it faces. We need to reduce duplication of effort among United Nations agencies dealing with the drug problem, improve co-ordination and make sure that resources are properly used.

The United Nations needs to have a single unified body which can tackle all aspects of the drug problem. That body should be strong, well-structured and with a single, full-time head. There should be sensible safeguards, of course, to preserve the autonomy of the International Narcotics Control Board. The new body should be responsible for decision-making across the full range of issues. The best way of achieving this, it seems to us, would be to merge the three existing bodies into something new, more streamlined and better able to confront the challenge. We have no time for small quarrels over the boundaries between the responsibilities of different bodies. We certainly have no resources to waste on duplication.

So I warmly welcome the decision of the General Assembly to ask the Secretary-General to appoint a group of experts to review the structure of the United Nations drugs agencies. I am sure that the group will take into account the views expressed at the session.

Of course, along with the need for restructuring goes the need for more resources. The existing United Nations drugs bodies, financed from the regular budget, lack sufficient resources to deal with their increasing workload. We and

(Mr. Hurd, United Kingdom)

other Governments have provided extra-budgetary assistance. But if we are to win, more resources from within the existing regular budget are required, as well as voluntary contributions from all Member States, towards United Nations defined and administered projects.

As well as co-operation with the United Nations, I stress the need for better regional co-operation. The United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control has emphasized the importance of regional co-operation. We believe such co-operation, in Europe and in other parts of the world, is an essential part of our strategy.

We therefore support the challenging new ideas proposed by UNFDAC for a subregional approach in those parts of the world where illicit production and drug trafficking are most pernicious. But, of course, this approach can only work properly if every Government in the subregion fully co-operates with UNFDAC.

International co-operation needs to be complemented by national action. This means first that Member States should ratify and enforce the existing international conventions - I am thinking especially of the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Drug Trafficking. We have legislation now before the British Parliament which should enable us to ratify the 1988 Convention by the end of this year. Quite apart from that, we have already gone a long way towards implementing its provisions.

Secondly, fine words in an international convention are not enough. Multilateral and bilateral drugs agreements must be given practical effect through national legislation. The United Nations might help countries to draft legislation and set up law enforcement training programmes and systems for information exchange. But the key requirement, it seems to us, is the political will of national governments and national parliaments to legislate.

Thirdly, more countries should be ready to negotiate agreements on the tracing, freezing and confiscation of drug traffickers' assets. A convicted drugs

(Mr. Hurd, United Kingdom)

trafficker should forfeit his loot as well as his liberty. Millions of pounds can now be moved between continents at the touch of a computer terminal. This means that we need a fine-meshed net of international agreements. The report of the Financial Action Task Force, established at the Paris economic summit, contains 40 concrete recommendations covering all aspects of the laundering of drug money. It provides important guidelines for future action.

Next, we must monitor together the trade in chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs. Many of these have legitimate uses; we have to prevent their diversion into the illicit manufacture of drugs. The provisions of article 12 of the 1988 Convention cover this point and are crucial. We are working with our partners in the European Community to develop a European system for monitoring domestic and international trade in the relevant substances while limiting interference with legitimate trade. This would be a major step towards an effective world-wide network for keeping track of suspect consignments of chemicals. We also support the Colombian Government's important initiative for a conference between Governments and firms which produce chemical substances.

In Britain, we rely on a combination of law enforcement and public education. Our Drug Trafficking Offences Act, which provides for the confiscation of traffickers' assets, has been in force since 1987.

We are working hard to conclude reciprocal agreements with other countries to allow for co-operation in the confiscation of the proceeds of drug-trafficking. So far, in a short period of about two years, we have concluded 13 such bilateral agreements. We expect to sign others over the next few months. We hope that more and more countries will join us in pursuing this initiative. We welcome the clear provisions in the 1988 United Nations Convention against illicit trafficking to facilitate international co-operation in the confiscation of the proceeds of this trade. I listened with much interest just now to the statement of the Spanish

(Mr. Hurd, United Kingdom)

Minister. Early next week I will be in Madrid to explore with his colleague the Foreign Minister how we can best develop our existing co-operation so as to combat drug trafficking in the Straits of Gibraltar in the most effective fashion.

The fact is we do not yet have, either in Europe or internationally, an adequate network of police co-operation against the drug trade. We have made some progress in Europe since I first suggested some time ago the need for a European drugs intelligence unit. The United Kingdom and our European Community partners are steadily building up the number of drug liaison officers in friendly capitals, but I believe the scope for further collaboration is immense.

Our public education initiatives include a major health information campaign, launched in 1985. The first programme consisted of nationwide anti-heroin publicity aimed specifically at young people at risk. Two years ago, because of changed circumstances, we changed the emphasis to highlight the dangers of contracting diseases, particularly the HIV virus, through injecting drugs. This year's campaign, to be launched next week, will emphasize the dangers of loss of control through overdose or accident.

We have taken other notable initiatives in the education service, which again I believe is crucial. Since 1986, we have provided financial support for local education authorities in England and Wales to appoint "Drug Education Co-ordinators" and to provide in-service training for teachers on drug misuse. Under our new National Curriculum all primary and secondary schools in England and Wales are required to provide drugs education.

A new drug prevention initiative is aimed at producing co-operation in those neighbourhoods most at risk from drugs, particularly from the threat of cocaine and "crack". Local drug prevention teams will be set up to respond to local needs and concerns. The suggestion here is that citizens at risk will be deterred not by the

(Mr. Hurd, United Kingdom)

voices of distant politicians but by those in their own community whom they know and respect. We believe that by tackling the problem at the grass-roots level we have a better hope of alerting the ordinary person to the dangers.

As representatives know, the United Kingdom, with the United Nations, is acting as host to the World Ministerial Summit, in London from 9 to 11 April. This is the third major event in the international drugs calendar for 1990. All Member States of the United Nations have been invited.

(Mr. Hurd, United Kingdom)

At that summit meeting we aim to increase the international commitment to reducing demand for drugs and to strengthen the effectiveness of demand-reduction policies by exchanging skills and experiences. We shall also focus particularly on cocaine. We hope to identify together ways in which we can work more effectively to reduce the demand for cocaine, its production and its trafficking.

Under our aid programme we plan to provide bilateral drugs-related help to 26 countries in four continents. We are contributing to European Community aid, to the United Nations Development Programme and to other bodies involved in drugs-related programmes in three main ways: through large-scale rural-development projects aimed at discouraging drugs production, through smaller discrete aid packages directed at improving enforcement and control and through drugs education and rehabilitation programmes.

One important recipient of British aid is Colombia, and I would like from this rostrum to support wholeheartedly President Barco's courageous stand against the drugs barons in his country. I think that as the international community we must all admire and applaud his strength and determination, and, because of that, we are providing a substantial package of assistance to Colombia, including equipment and expertise in bomb disposal, personnel protection and other matters. We are trying to target this training and assistance in close consultation with the Colombian Government, and we co-ordinate our assistance carefully with other donors to make sure there is no duplication.

There are some who say that the struggle against drugs can never be won - and certainly it will be long and difficult. We face, on the one hand, the appetite of trafficking for huge profits, which so far have been easily earned, and, on the other hand, the search among our citizens for ever-more-dramatic forms of artificial excitement. These are the two powerful engines of the drug trade, and they will not be easily immobilized. But to admit defeat - for example, by

(Mr. Hurd, United Kingdom)

legalizing all or part of that activity - would condemn very many of those whom we represent to lives of squalor and despair. That is why we reject such advice. The special session can send out a clear signal of our determination to continue to intensify our joint efforts to combat drug trafficking and misuse. I hope we can reach agreement to strengthen, as I have suggested, the United Nations machinery for tackling those problems. I hope we can reach agreement to improve participation in and compliance with existing international agreements and to reinforce action at the national level.

At stake, as every speaker has stressed, is the suffering of countless individuals. We can improve their prospects, we can relieve their suffering, by making a success of our meeting. We shall work hard, here and hereafter, to be rid of this nightmare.

Mr. BONGO (Gabon)(interpretation from French): The delegation of Gabon takes pleasure in seeing you, Sir, presiding over the work of the General Assembly's seventeenth special session. We are sure that under your guidance our work will be crowned with success.

Throughout history and in every part of the world, drug-related problems have always existed, to a greater or lesser degree according to the times. Thus, although substances that can ease human pain or alter human behaviour have long been known to our societies, their possible uses were always determined by traditional medicine, thereby forestalling illicit trafficking and abuse.

Unfortunately, today we see that, in light of the "culture shock", the profit motive, the serious economic crisis, all kinds of restraints have disappeared, providing many people with easy access to such substances and thus leading to the abuses of which we are all aware.

The international community has not been blind to that situation. It has adopted a number of measures, including the 1961, 1971 and 1988 Conventions, that

(Mr. Bongo, Gabon)

provide an appropriate framework for regulating the supply and movement of drugs and seek to promote co-operation among parties in order effectively to attack various aspects of illicit trafficking in drugs and psychotropic substances.

Africa has also participated in that struggle. In 1979 and 1980 the Organization of African Unity (OAU) adopted two resolutions demonstrating its concern and its determination to fight drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking. Indeed, long thought to be a region untouched by this phenomenon, Africa - if we judge by the number of seizures made in recent years - is becoming a zone of transit, production and consumption. The situation may get worse if some rapid, active regional co-operation is not achieved.

For its part, Gabon is determined to take action. Accordingly, in May 1989 it convened a national seminar on drug problem. As a result of that seminar, the Government set up an interministerial committee to combat drugs and, last January, it held a training course for agents to combat drug trafficking under a future national commission. That commission will be especially entrusted with co-ordinating the work of services involved in the fight against the trafficking in such products, which sow death or doom forever so many expressionless victims, their vacant gazes tinged with a boundless sorrow, in an affront to human dignity.

The action undertaken at the level of means has been echoed at the legislative level. Specific articles of the Gabonese Penal Code setting penalties for the use of drugs will be amended to bring them into line with the actual scope of the problem. At the same time an educational campaign on the dangers of drugs will be conducted, since prevention cannot exist without information.

To combat this gangrene at the regional level, the Gabonese Government, with the assistance of friendly countries and international bodies, will organize in May 1990 the first seminar of the Economic Community for Central Africa (ECCA) on drug problems. That meeting will enable us to take stock of the regional situation and

(Mr. Bongo, Gabon)

will attempt to establish a joint medium- and long-term policy based on enhanced co-operation among the various administrations of the States concerned, particularly through the creation of an ECCA drugs commission.

Although Gabon has hitherto escaped the intensive cultivation of drugs, we now know officially, since the first national seminar, that it has not managed to avoid serving as a transit site for drug trafficking. Indeed, in 1989 our competent services seized several hundred kilos of cannabis, some ten kilos of heroin, hundreds of grams of cocaine and 15,000 tablets of psychotropic substances, including stimulants and amphetamines.

Nevertheless, no matter how small the scale of Gabon's cultivation and abuse of cannabis may be compared to the high figures we find elsewhere in the world, the fact remains that it represents for us the same threat at the social level that cancer represents for an individual. We must therefore act quickly.

(Mr. Bongo, Gabon)

From that standpoint, Gabon is gratified at the commitment made during the meeting on drugs held in Madrid in October last, and more recently the meeting in Cartagena, in regard to, inter alia, the substitution for coca of other crops with guaranteed sales.

But, while this initiative does constitute the beginning of a solution, it does not solve the problem of remunerative prices for these products. How are we going to persuade the peasant for whom the growing of cocoa is the principal source of income to live by this logic, if the decline in the terms of trade remains the main cause of the imbalance of our economies? Can the tide of this evil still be stemmed? That may well be the question. For our part, we remain convinced that victory lies within the grasp of our determination to battle this hideous monster. We are convinced that we shall succeed if we really want to.

What we have to do now is follow the chain that runs from the producer to the dealer to the drug lords squatting on their millions of narco-dollars, each wad of which represents a broken life, a hope betrayed. But such action must not overlook the principal link in the chain, perhaps the most pernicious because of its apparent respectability - that is, the banker who deals with the laundering of a gold mine whose origins and consequences are crime and violence.

In this context, the countries of the South, particularly those of subtropical Africa, which today are showing the precursor symptoms of a very contagious disease, must establish real co-operation with the Governments of the countries that are the producers, the transit points and the destination of these drugs. That is absolutely essential. Lack of this necessary co-operation could seriously jeopardize the efforts made individually by each State. Practice has shown that the fight against this scourge is unlikely to be successful if it is conducted in a piecemeal fashion that leaves the field free for the monster to revive and thrive in new parts of the world that have no means of defence against it.

(Mr. Bongo, Gabon)

It is clear, therefore, that only if the efforts of all are combined will each State be able to undertake consistent and effective action in accordance with the multidisciplinary plan drawn up by the 1987 Vienna Conference on Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking. That is why Gabon would welcome with the greatest interest assistance that it could be given by the specialized agencies of the United Nations in order to set up these national programmes to combat drug abuse and illicit drug trafficking.

Apart from the great damage done to man and society by drug production and abuse, we hardly need to remind the Assembly that there are other equally pernicious factors that, in the short or long term, contribute to the destruction of the environment. Indeed, it would appear that the growing of coca in the Andean region is responsible for the deforestation of more than 20,000 hectares of tropical forest each year, and the soil is eroding particularly rapidly because the coca bushes are planted on the hillsides. Furthermore, seized by the thirst for profit, the peasants appear to be more and more inclined to transform coca into cocaine, using for this purpose industrial quantities of kerosene, sulphuric acid, quicklime, acetone and carbides that poison streams, rivers and their banks.

That illustrates the link between the struggle against drug trafficking and the need to rethink development.

Members have just heard the voice of Gabon, the cry from the heart of a father who, like all parents, is haunted by this spectre, to whose shadow we cannot be indifferent. We are determined to make sure that the horizon is clear, that the young people in our respective countries will be able to look to the future with confidence and tranquillity.

In that context, since "justice is sacred" - as President Bongo has asserted - it is for us to teach our young people love and the taste for effort, the only

(Mr. Bongo, Gabon)

means by which they can take their destiny into their own hands, leaving far behind these artificial paradises offered by drugs.

The PRESIDENT: I should like to commend the following countries whose representatives were in their seats at 10.10 o'clock this morning: Algeria, Antigua and Barbuda, Austria, Belgium, Burkina Faso, Burundi, China, Colombia, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, France, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Israel, Jamaica, Japan, Lebanon, Malawi, Malta, Norway, Paraguay, Portugal Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Suriname, Sweden, the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and Yemen. I thank them very much for their understanding.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.